

ALVĪRĪ- (E. Yarshater) - Originally Published: December 15, 1989

ALVĪRĪ, a dialect spoken in the village of Alvīr and belonging to the Central group of Iranian dialects. Alvīr is a declining village of some 250 families (1960; local estimate) in Turkish-speaking *Ḳaragān* district of *Sāva*, about 60 km northwest of *Sāva* and 50 km southwest of *Ešteḥārd*. The ruins of some mud-brick fortifications attest to its greater past significance, as does the somewhat disproportionate extent of its crafts and industries—iron-mongering, carpentry, leather-working, shoemaking, arms-repairing, and dyeing. The main produce of the village, which includes a number of far-flung farms, is cereals, potatoes, and some fruits; a few animals are also kept. Turkish is understood and sometimes spoken in Alvīr and is gaining. ‘Abbāsābād, a village of some 80 families derived from Alvīr, is now Turkish-speaking. *Vīdar*, a village some 12 km to the east, still speaks an Iranian dialect, close but not identical to Alvīrī.

Phonology. Alvīrī consonants are the same as those of Persian; the vowels are *i*, *e*, *a*, *ö*, *o*, *ā*, *u*. Cases of vowel harmony, rounding of *e* and *a*, and palatalizing of round vowels occur, e.g., *xöšdöneš etā* “he himself is coming,” *bē-jünden* “to chew.”

Morphology. A masculine and a feminine gender is distinguished in nouns, in the 3rd person singular of the personal pronouns, in demonstrative adjectives and pronouns, and in the 3rd singular of all tenses of intransitive verbs and of the present and subjunctive of transitive verbs, i.e., where the passive (ergative) construction is not involved. The common indicator of the feminine gender is an unstressed *-a*: *Hasan etāy* “Hasan is coming” but *tete-e Hasan etāya* “Hasan’s daughter is coming;” *am zimin xub ni* “this land is not good,” but *ama oka xub nia* “this water is not good;” *eš egua bāy/bāya* “he/she wants to come;” *āykara/āykaria* “he/she opens.”

Whereas Alvīrī has been conservative in the retention of gender distinction, it has lost the oblique plural ending in *-on/-un* (*-hā* being the only plural marker), and also, like Persian, any trace of cases. For noun relationships various post-positions are employed, e.g. *kenaka-de āgir* “take from that girl,” *Hasan-bā bavāj* “tell Hasan,” *tetey xodum-bejā eberum* “I take thee along with me.” In pronouns, however, the direct and the oblique are distinguished in non-suffix forms (see [Table 1](#)).

| Dir. | az | ta | u/ua | (masc. and fem.) |
|-------|-------------|-------------|---------------|------------------|
| | <i>jemā</i> | <i>šemā</i> | <i>unehā</i> | |
| Obl. | <i>men</i> | <i>ta</i> | <i>ju</i> | |
| | <i>jemā</i> | <i>šemā</i> | <i>juneḥā</i> | |
| Suff. | <i>-m</i> | <i>-i</i> | <i>-š</i> | |
| | <i>-mun</i> | <i>-yun</i> | <i>-šun</i> | |

Table 1. Alvīrī pronoun forms.

The suffix pronouns, as in *Tātī*, are used as possessive and oblique pronouns, but more frequently as the agents in passive constructions. The position of these pronouns, however, brings Alvīrī (like *Vīdarī*) more in line with southern Central dialects: When a verb has an object, or an adverb, the suffix pronoun is suffixed to one of them; but when there is neither, it follows not the verb (as in South *Tātī* in general) but the verbal prefix, whether the prefix is

a conjugational marker or part of the stem, the only exception occurring with the imperfect marker *e(t)*, which follows the suffix pronoun. Examples: *tira-m bāšind* “I fired a shot,” *be-m āšind* “I threw, shot;” *o-m* (< *ā-m*) *dā*, *ā-y dā*, *ā-š dā* “I, thou, he gave,” *ā-y gerati* “thou hast brought,” *de-š dard ešu* “he was going,” but *em-et-āšin* “I was throwing,” *i-e-gusta bašey* “thou wanted to go” (cf. *Kvānsārī iž bavāt* “he said,” *Naṭanzī i-xus* “he threw,” *Sīvandī iš vurd* “he brought,” *Qohrūdī m-ā’i* “I want”).

The verbal system follows the general pattern of the Central dialects: It employs a present and a past stem—the latter based on an old participle in *-ta*—for present and past tenses respectively, and uses the passive construction for past transitive verbs. A single set of personal endings is used for both present and past tenses: *-em(a)*, *-i*, *-a/-ia* (masc. and fem.), *un(a)*, *-ayā*, *-enda*. The distinction of tenses and moods is helped by the use of conjugational markers: stressed *ba-* (or *be-*, depending on its environment) for the imperative, the subjunctive and the preterite; unstressed *be-* for the imperfect, which adds *-i* (*-y* after a vowel) before the endings, and *e-* (*et-* before a vowel) for the present. Examples: *ba-vin* “see!,” *ba-vazema* “that I run,” *ba-suta* “it burnt,” *ba-sut-i* “it is burnt,” *b-om-i bima* “I had come.” When the stem includes a prefix, the *ba-*, *be-* markers are dropped: *a-vendar* “stay, stand up!,” *ā-vendardeyma* “I stood up,” *e-vazema* “I run, am running,” *e-šima* “I used to go, was going,” *et-āyma* “I am coming,” *et-āšinda* “I was shooting.” If the stem includes a prefix, then *e-* is placed after it, and if the prefix is a vowel or ends in one, *e-* changes into *-y-*: *ā-y-vendarema* “I am staying,” *e-y-pāčona* “we scatter, winnow,” *nun-em ā-y-gerate* “I was buying bread” (cf. *ne-y-duna* “we do not give,” *patle-y-karuna* “we make groats”). The use of imperfective *e-*, *et-* and their variations is common to southern Central dialects (cf. G. Morgenstierne, *HO 4, Iranistik 1*, p. 165; O. Mann and K. Hadank, *Kurdisch-persische Forschungen III*, Berlin, 1926, pp. 15-16). The passive voice occasionally uses an old form in *-i-* common among the *Tātī* dialects: *e-vin-i-a* “is seen,” *dōzd ba-gir-i-asta* “the thief was seized,” *agar y-e-gu dōzd be-gir-i-a* “if you want the thief to be seized,” *har-ru tira et-ašin-i-a* “every day shot(s) are fired (sing.).”

Bibliography:

Razmārā, *Farhang I*, p. 19, s. *Alvīr*.

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